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# Advanced Teaming Strategies for Winning Federal Contracts (Strategies to Build Capacity)

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# Facilitating Teaming Arrangements

A significant way to increase contract opportunities for Small, 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned and Women-Owned Small Businesses is through teaming arrangements and subcontracting relationships.

Teaming arrangements are desirable from a federal and industry standpoint because they enable the companies involved to compliment each other's unique capabilities and offer the government the best combination of performance, cost, and delivery for the product being acquired.

Teaming agreements may include large businesses or other small businesses. There may be size issues involved when small businesses enter teaming agreements. The parties can be considered affiliated and the combined receipts/employees of the teaming partners will determine whether the entity meets the size standard (13CFR 121.103). NEDA Business Consultants, Inc. can assist you in structuring the teaming agreements.

# What is a Teaming Arrangement?

The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 9.6, Contractor Team Arrangements, describes contractor team arrangements as follows:

“Two or more companies form a partnership or joint venture to act as a potential prime contractor”;

or

“A potential prime contractor agrees with one or more other companies to have them act as its subcontractors under a specified Government contract or acquisition program.”

# What is a Major Difference Between a Partnership and a Joint Venture?

A partnership is a voluntary association of two or more individuals to carry on a business for profit, usually on a permanent basis.  A limited partnership provides for limited liability of one or more of the partners.

A joint venture, consists of two or more companies combining their resources to form a new company, as a separate entity from the existing companies, for the purpose of performing a contract.  Once the contract is completed, the joint venture is dissolved along with the new company that was formed to perform the contract.

# What Does The Teaming Process Involve?

To establish teaming arrangements, small businesses or large and small businesses combine their resources to bid on major procurements.

The companies may combine their financial capabilities, managerial and technical skills, personnel, business facilities and/or equipment to become a successful bidder on a contract.

# What Does The Teaming Process Involve?

Teaming with another company involves finding the right partner.

This results in combining your products and services with your partner's products and services.

In forming a teaming relationship it is recommended that you

1) Research your potential partner's financial condition.

2) Check the credit history of the company, working capital, past performance and current teaming relationships.

3) Know your partner's economic viability.

4) Identify your firm's strengths, weaknesses, and future goals.

# What Does The Teaming Process Involve?

Participants in teaming and subcontracting agreements should be knowledgeable about the standard terms and conditions of the agreement.

Questions regarding claims, the small business size status of the participants, regulations, federal policy, state laws, legislation, reimbursement, payment, licenses, responsibility and obligation should be addressed before entering into the teaming agreement.

# What Benefits Can I Expect From Teaming Arrangements?

For Small, 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned and Women-Owned Small Businesses, teaming with a prime contractor has many benefits, including the opportunity to:

1. Build capacity ( realize advancements in management and technical skills)
2. Increase annual profits
3. Work on large government procurements
4. Increase working capital
5. Gain experience with a diverse workforce
6. Expand and/or diversify products
7. Network to develop strong business relationships
8. Increase contract awards

# MENTOR PROTÉGÉ PROGRAMS

One way small businesses can gain access to federal procurement opportunities is through mentor protégé programs. With the help of a mentor, a small business is able to gain access to additional business resources, including credit and capital, managerial and technical training, and networking opportunities.

The main goal of the partnership between the mentor and protégé is to help the protégé become a valued business partner and to eventually be able to perform as a successful prime contractor.

# MENTOR PROTÉGÉ PROGRAMS INTRODUCTION

Each federal agency and Department with procurement authority is responsible for establishing a Mentor Protégé program to help achieve its goals for Small, 8(a), SDB, HUBZone, Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned and Women-Owned Small Businesses.

# IS CERTIFICATION REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN A MENTOR PROTÉGÉ PROGRAM?

The SBA Mentor Protégé program is available only to 8(a) firms that have been certified into that program.

Other federal agency Mentor Protégé programs require verification of the status of the firm as an 8(a), Small Disadvantaged Business or HUBZone firm for program participation. However, the participation of a SDVB or a WOSB in a federal Mentor Protégé program only requires self certification of the firm's status.

# WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A MENTOR?

Before entering into a Mentor Protégé relationship, it is recommended that you make sure the mentor has the ability to make a commitment to help develop your company and to provide various forms of assistance to improve the ability of your small business to compete for contracts.

# WHAT QUALITIES SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A MENTOR?

Ensure that your mentor:

1. Has at least two years of financial profitability
2. Possesses good personal, professional and business character
3. Does not appear on the federal list of debarred or suspended contractors
4. Has experience in government contracting
5. Has practical and expert business skills and knowledge to share with you as the protégé firm.

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A MENTOR PROTÉGÉ RELATIONSHIP?

Benefits from the Mentor Protégé relationship may include:

1. An increase in annual profits
2. Opportunities to joint venture with prime contractors
3. Increased working capital
4. Technical and managerial training opportunities
5. Increased personnel to manage projects
6. Larger working facilities
7. Additional and/or state of the art equipment

In addition, protégés may enjoy the benefits of financial assistance in the form of equity investments and/or loans.

# WHERE CAN I FIND A MENTOR?

One way to find a mentor is to contact one of the federal agencies that has a Mentor Protégé program.  Speak to the small business representative in the agency you contact.

Most often, the small business office is the primary contact for small business procurement activity. That office is generally located within each agency’s Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU).

# WHERE CAN I FIND A MENTOR?

A way to find a mentor is through marketing and networking.

You may want to advertise your services on the SBA's PRO-Net http://pro-net.sba.gov/ or the Federal Business Opportunities web site www.fedbizopps.gov. Both of these are popular sites visited by prime contractors.

See attached list of Federal Agency Mentor Protégé Programs.

# CORPORATE AND FEDERAL MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS

Generally, corporate/federal contracting relationships are administered through the corporation's Small Business Development Office, Diversity Supplier Officer, Purchasing Department or offices with similar names.

These offices are often in contact with federal agencies regarding procurement opportunities. The point of contact is usually the corporate Small Business Liaison Officer.

# Where Can I Find Federal Procurement Teaming Opportunities?

One of the frequently used web sites to search for procurement teaming opportunities is the Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps) web site. (www.fedbizops.gov)

FedBizOpps is the government's single point of entry for Federal government procurement opportunities over $25,000.

Small businesses seeking federal procurements can search, monitor and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire Federal government.

# Where Can I Find Federal Procurement Teaming Opportunities?

The Small Business Administration's (SBA) SUB-Net is another site where small businesses can search for procurement opportunities, that could lead to teaming arrangements.Prime contractors post solicitations on the SUB-Net site.  Solicitations are reviewed by SBA personnel for accuracy in text content.  Accurate solicitations are activated by SBA personnel and the prime contractor is given a password to post additional solicitations.The web address for SUB-Net is http://web.sba.gov/subnet/.

The Central Contractor Registry (CCR) www.ccr.gov which now incorporates the SBA's PRO-Net function is an excellent resource to use to search for teaming partners. Small businesses are also potential teaming partners.

# Where Can I Find Federal Procurement Teaming Opportunities?

The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) in each federal agency has information about procurement opportunities and how to market your company to find teaming arrangements.

You may connect to each of the OSDBU offices through several web sites, including the following:

http://www.womenbiz.gov,

http://www.ustreas.gov/sba/,

http://www.osec.doc.gov/osdbu/.

# Where Can I Find Federal Procurement Teaming Opportunities?

Most of the OSDBU web sites list contact names and telephone numbers. You can contact one of the small business specialists in the OSDBU office to discuss your company’s teaming needs.

The small business specialist will also be able to assist you with information about what types of procurements are available for your products or services now and in the future.

# Where Can I Find Corporate Teaming Opportunities?

Corporations seek teaming opportunities with small businesses through their Small Business Programs also called Supplier Diversity Programs.

By contacting the supplier diversity offices, small businesses can network and develop business relationships that can result in teaming opportunities and procurement awards.

A number of the prime contractors include small business contact information and resources on their web sites under “Supplier Diversity Program” or “Small Business Program.”

# Where Can I Find Corporate Teaming Opportunities?

An important networking resource is a publication entitled “Purchasing People in Major Corporations”. The publication provides information about major U.S. corporations and lists names, phone numbers, e-mails, and the addresses of corporate diversity supplier program offices. This publication is updated and issued annually by Diversity Information Resources, Inc. (DIR).

See www.diversityinforesources.com for order information.